

**REMARKS**

In the Office Action, dated December 23, 2003, the Examiner states that Claims 1-17 are pending, Claims 1-8 and 17 are rejected and Claims 9-16 are withdrawn. By the present Amendment, Applicants amend the specification, the claims, and the abstract.

The Applicants have amended the claims, abstract and specification to replace the term "lip portion" with --neck portion--. The Applicants consider the term "neck portion" to more accurately describe that portion of the bottle, and consider that this amendment does not constitute new matter. The abstract and specification have also been amended to correct grammatical informalities. These amendments have been made to clarify the application and not for reasons related to patentability in view of the cited prior art.

In the Office Action, Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Hada et al. (US 5,879,648) in view of Raniwala (US 2002/0085971). Claim 8 is rejected in further view of Strohn (DE 4212433). Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Taggart (US 6,209,591) in view of Smith et al. (US 2003/0068251). The Applicants consider the amended claims to overcome these rejections.

Amended Claim 1 incorporates the features of previous Claims 2 and 3, and is specifically directed to a bottle instead of a container. The method of Claim 1 thus amended includes the step of preheating the entire bottle and additionally preheating the neck portion of the bottle. The support for this amendment may be found on page 3, lines 10-20, and page 6, lines 17-21, of the specification.

In each of the recited prior art references there is no teaching or suggestion regarding the step of preheating the bottle, and additionally preheating the neck portion thereof which is more difficult to preheat to the

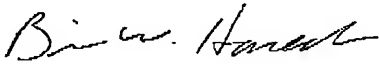
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desired temperature. Therefore, the Applicants consider the rejections to the claims overcome.

In light of the foregoing response, all the outstanding objections and rejections have been overcome. Applicant respectfully submits that this application should now be in better condition for allowance and respectfully requests favorable consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

  
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Attorney for Applicant  
Brian W. Hameder  
c/o Ladas & Parry  
224 South Michigan Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60604  
(312) 427-1300  
Reg. No. 45613